employment of children in hazardous occupations and processes and regulates their working in others. Government is committed to elimination of child labour in all its forms. However, considering the nature and magnitude of the problem, Government is following a sequential approach of initially withdrawing and rehabilitating children working in hazardous occupations and processes.

(b) Yes, Sir. Suggestions are received from time to time from State Governments and other authorities. Some of these suggestions include fixing a minimum age for employment, prohibiting all forms of child labour, redefining child as a person below the age of 18 years, setting up of Special Courts for child labour cases, raising the penalties, making specific provisions to cover the offence of trafficking of children for labour, etc.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal presently under the consideration of the Government to bring in new legislation. However, consultations are held with State Government and other stakeholders on the suggestions received.

**EPE investment in Stock market**

1735. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Governmen as decided to keep open its option to invest 5 per cent of the Employees Provident Fund in the Stock market;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that trade unions have not agreed for this proposal; and

(d) if so, the details of the discussions held with the Central trade unions and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund in which central trade unions are represented, in its 178th meeting has resolved not to exercise the option of investing 5% of the Employees' Provident Fund monies in equities.

**Effect of labour training on productivity**

†1736: DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production in the country may be raised upto 61% by increasing 10% expenditure of GDP on labour training;

(b) if not, assessment of Government in this regard; and

(c) the quantum of amount increased by Government in the funds earmarked for the expansion and development of training programme meant for augmentation of labour skill from 2004-05 to 2006-07?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Agriculture, Industry & Services sectors are the

†riginal notice of the question was received in Hindi.